

Message Text

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14
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SAM-01

MCT-01 /087 W
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P R 101618Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7879
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 8542

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, SP
SUBJECT: NOVEMBER 12 "DAY OF STOPPAGES"

REF: MADRID 7910

1. AT WRITING, WE HAVE DETECTED ONLY MODERATE INTEREST IN
THE NOV. 12 "DAY OF STOPPAGES" (REFTEL) CALLED BY THE COS
(COORDINADORA DE ORGANIZACIONES SINDICALES - THE NATIONAL
"UNITY OF ACTION" MECHANISM GROUPING THE "BIG THREE" ILLEGAL
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UNIONS) TO PROTEST THE GOVT'S RECENTLY ANNOUNCED ECONOMIC

MEASURES. DESPITE SOME REFERENCES (BY THE PRESS AND CERTAIN RADICAL NON-COS SPLINTER LABOR GROUPS) TO A "GENERAL STRIKE," IT REMAINS THE INTENTION OF THE SPONSORING TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION TO HAVE "LIMITED AND PEACEFUL" STOPPAGES OF VARIOUS PERIODS OF DURATION NOVEMBER 12 AT THE WORKSITE. THE SOCIALIST UGT CLAIMED TO THE EMBASSY NOVEMBER 10 THAT SUCH MISLEADING PRESS REFERENCES CONSTITUTED A GOVT MANEUVER WHICH WOULD ENABLE THEM TO STATE ON NOV. 13 THAT THE "GENERAL STRIKE" HAD BEEN A FAILURE. THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR ON NOV. 9 ANNOUNCED ITS FIRM INTENTION TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND ORDER AND TO ACT WITH "MAXIMUM ENERGY" AGAINST ANY ILLEGAL PICKET ACTIVITY.

2. COMMENTING ON THE OVERALL ROLE OF THE COS IN THE LABOR SCENE, A UGT SOURCE TOLD US RECENTLY THAT HE FORESAW A SHORT LINE FOR THE COS WHICH WOULD "FADE AWAY" ONCE THE OPPOSITION UNIONS WERE LEGALIZED. THERE WAS NOT A GOOD RELATIONSHIP AT THE BASE AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY NOV. 12 ACTIVITIES WERE BEING PLANNED INDIVIDUALLY BY THE THREE COS UNIONS, NOT BY A UNIFIED EFFORT. THE UGT WAS IN EFFECT LETTING EACH LOCAL DECIDE WHAT IT WANTED TO DO. SOME STOPPAGES WOULD BE AS LITTLE AS 10 MINUTES, OTHERS ONE HOUR OR ALL DAY, DEPENDING UPON THE REGION AND WORK SITUATION. AN USO SPOKESMAN HAS TOLD US THAT THERE IS A "GOOD ATMOSPHERE" IN THE FACTORIES FOR "PARTIAL AND PEACEFUL STOPPAGES."

3. FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED BY OUR CONSULATES AND OTHER SOURCES, A NATIONAL PREVIEW OF NOV. 12 SHAPES UP AS FOLLOWS. THE BARCELONA INDUSTRIAL AREA SEEMS FAIRLY CALM, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE OVERT PUBLICITY AND IT DOESN'T APPEAR AS IF IT WILL BE ANY BIG DEAL. SOME CATALAN FACTORIES HAVE EVEN REPORTED THEIR WORKERS ARE PLANNING TO LENGTHEN THEIR SHIFTS BY THE AMOUNT OF TIME THEY PLAN TO CALL FOR A STOPPAGE, THUS AVOIDING DOCKING OF WAGES. THE FIVE UNIONS IN CATALUNYA (UGT, USO, CNT, SOC, AND WORKERS' COMMISSIONS-SWC) HAVE CALLED JOINTLY FOR A "DAY OF STRUGGLE" ON NOV. 12. IN THE SEVILLA REGION, WHILE PUBLICITY HAS BEEN SCARCE, A MEETING OF SOME 800 RUN BY THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED SWC ON NOV. 9, DECIDED TO ORGANIZE STOPPAGES OF UNSPECIFIED DURATION IN THE METAL INDUSTRY. THERE IS NOT THE SAME MILITANT CLIMATE IN THE BASQUE REGION AS THERE WAS FOR THE SEPT. 27 DEMONSTRATION WHEN A QUARTER MILLION

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WORKERS TURNED OUT (MADRID 7386). ADDING CONFUSION TO THE BASQUE SCENE IS THE FACT THAT THE TWO STV (SOLIDARITY OF BASQUE WORKERS) FACTIONS HAVE ISSUED CONFLICTING INSTRUCTIONS. THE TRADITIONAL FACTION GAVE THEIR SUPPORT IN ORDER TO "PRESERVE LABOR UNITY." ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DISSIDENT STV GROUP TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT THEY WERE BOYCOTTING WHAT THEY PERCEIVED TO BE A BASICALLY POLITICAL MOVE MANIPULATED BY "OUTSIDE" (MEANING NON-BASQUE) POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS. THE OPPOSITION PLATAJUNTA

(MINUS SOME CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC ELEMENTS) HAS GIVEN VERBAL SUPPORT TO THE NOV. 12 "DAY OF STOPPAGES."

4. SYNDICAL RELATIONS MINISTER DE LA MATA TOLD US ON NOV. 9 THAT HE ANTICIPATED ONLY MODERATELY SUCCESSFUL AND BASICALLY PEACEFUL STOPPAGES ON NOV. 12, AND QUOTED A BALLPARK FIGURE OF PERHAPS ONE MILLION PARTICIPANTS NATIONWIDE (OUT OF SOME NINE MILLION WAGE-EARNERS). THE METAL AND CONSTRUCTION FIELDS WERE THE MOST VULNERABLE. SOME REGIONS WOULD OBVIOUSLY RESPOND MORE MILITANTLY THAN OTHERS, AND HE MENTIONED MADRID, SEVILLA, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT BARCELONA AND BILBAO. HE WAS KEEPING HIS FINGERS CROSSED THAT NO VIOLENT INCIDENT WOULD COME ALONG IN THE MEANTIME.

5. COMMENT. IT WOULD APPEAR THEAT BARRING UNFORESEEN EVENTS, NOV. 12 MAY WELL BE CHARACTERIZED BY MOSTLY PEACEFUL, OFTEN BRIEF, STOPPAGES RATHER THAN ANY MASS WALKOUTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS. IT IS CERTAINLY IN THE GOVT'S BEST INTEREST TO CONTINUE TO PLAY THINGS DOWN. SWC CAN MOBILIZE MORE SUPPORT THAN THE OTHER GROUPS, BUT IT'S ORGANIZED STRENGTH IS ALSO SMALL COMPARED TO THE LABOR FORCE. THE LACK OF CALLS FOR A GENERAL STRIKE SUGGESTS RECOGNITION THAT AN ALL-OUT EFFORT TO CONFRONT THE GOS WOULD BE UNSUCCESSFUL, HENCE THE RELIANCE ON WORKSHOP STOPPAGES OF VARYING DURATION. THE COS WILL CLAIM "VICTORY" IN THE PRESS AND COUNT EVERY WORKER WHO TOOK A LONG COFFEE BREAK, BUT THE REAL DANGER LIES IN THE POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENT INCIDENTS, PROVOKED BY EITHER EXTREME LEFT OR EXTREME RIGHT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, LABOR UNIONS, LABOR STRIKES, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MADRID08542
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760420-0144
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761163/aaaaccgq.tel
Line Count: 143
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MADRID 7910
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 JAN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 JAN 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <07 Jan 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NOVEMBER 12 "DAY OF STOPPAGES"
TAGS: ELAB, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006